The Australian Centre and the Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne
Literary Awards 2013
Judges' Reports

PETER BLAZEY FELLOWSHIP
$15,000 (approx.) award to further a work in progress in biography, autobiography or life-writing

WINNERS
Michael Farrell for *The Case of Jong Ah Sing*
Mark Mordue for *Tender Prey: The Life and Times of Nick Cave*

COMMENDED
Elmo Keep for *The Two Fathers*

*Two submissions stood out in terms of literary merit and the treatment of their subjects. The first was **Michael Farrell**'s* The Case of Jong Ah Sing, *a biographical study of a Chinese gold miner in colonial Victoria who was incarcerated in Yarra Bend Asylum in 1867, remaining there for over thirty years, until his death. Jong Ah Sing wrote a diary while in the asylum, and Farrell's study uses this to pursue a range of fascinating questions about Chinese life in Australia during this time, and to think about a very particular, challenging kind of colonial literary expression. Farrell brings a poet's perspective to Jong Ah Sing, drawing this obscure figure into the open and making him resonate with contemporary readers.*

*The second was an extract from **Mark Mordue**'s* Tender Prey, *a biography of the musician and singer, Nick Cave. Mordue's work carefully probes the life and times of this seminal Australian figure, giving a vivid account of his early life as a child growing up in Wangaratta in the 1960s. A wide range of local sources add depth and perspective – and new information – about Cave that readers will very much enjoy. This is a lively, evocative biography that expertly situates this influential musician in a framework of country living, family networks and local institutions.*

*Commendation is given to **Elmo Keep** for her submission from* The Two Fathers, *a compelling and evocative memoir that looked at a daughter's growing, piecemeal awareness of some hidden aspects of her father's remarkable life.*

JUDGES
Ms Penny Blazey, Professor Ken Gelder, Dr Jeff Sparrow, A/Professor Denise Varney